



**US Army Corps
of Engineers** ®
Norfolk District

News Release

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Corps, NOAA deploy 'Smart Buoy' near famous site explored by Captain John Smith

DELTAVILLE, Va. -- The crew of the Norfolk District's Derrick Boat Elizabeth and NOAA oceanographers deployed the nation's latest "smart buoy" at the mouth of the Rappahannock River here July 19.

As part of the Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System, or CBIBS, the smart buoy collects weather, oceanographic and water-quality observations and transmits this data -- along with historical and cultural information about the Bay -- wirelessly in near-real time.

CBIBS is the only operational buoy system in the Bay dedicated to maintaining the broad range of measurements necessary to track Bay restoration progress.

"These smart buoys are an example of NOAA's advancements in Earth-observing systems," said Mary Glackin, deputy under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere. "NOAA is working to improve our understanding of dynamic coastal areas like the Chesapeake Bay and how areas like the Bay are affected by changes in the global ocean."

This is the fourth smart buoy NOAA has launched to mark the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, America's first national water trail. The 3,000 mile trail migrates through parts of Virginia, Maryland, Delaware and the District of Columbia, along the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. The trail transits routes taken by Captain John Smith in 1607 and 1608 to chart the land and waterways of the Chesapeake Bay. The trail highlights the natural history of the Bay and provides new opportunities for recreation, education, and tourism in the Chesapeake Bay region, and encourages stewardship of this national treasure.

Last spring, the Corps' Elizabeth crew also teamed with NOAA on its maiden launch of the first CBIBS buoy in the James River, near historic Jamestown, Va., as part of the 400th anniversary celebration of the founding of the Jamestowne Settlement.

During the first smart buoy launching, the Elizabeth's crew used the vessel's huge crane to position the two-ton buoy within five feet of the predetermined global coordinates.

"I don't know if we are going to be able to find another crew for the other buoys, with as much knowledge and professionalism that this one on the Elizabeth has," said Doug Wilson, program manager of the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office's Integrated Coastal Observations Program.

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SMART BUOY

This fourth buoy deployment off Stingray Point in Deltaville, Va., also went without a hitch; the Elizabeth crew positioned the buoy right on top of NOAA's global coordinates.

The placement also marked the 400th anniversary of Captain John Smith's exploration of the region. In July 1608, while using a sword to fish in shallow waters near the mouth of the Rappahannock River, Smith was stung by a stingray and nearly died. The peninsula where this incident occurred was later named Stingray Point.

During the Stingray Point smart buoy launching, Director of the NOAA Chesapeake Office, Peyton Robertson, joined Rep. Robert Wittman and other officials on a nearby observation boat.

"Our partners, the Army Corps of Engineers, once again played a critical role in launching these smart buoys on time and on target. We appreciate their support of the Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System," remarked Robertson.

The Elizabeth's Captain, Richard Bruton, said he felt privileged to team with NOAA on a project that will help restore the health of the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

"After seeing the public's positive response for this project, it makes our job of supporting the boating community on a daily basis feel much more appreciated," said Bruton. "We look forward to launching the rest of the buoys."

The Elizabeth crew: Bruton, Dennis Barnes, Stan Caldwell, Glen Boykin, Pete Jeffers and Erik Sherer are set to team with NOAA to launch a fifth smart buoy on the Elizabeth River in Norfolk, Va., in September.

These buoy measurements can be publicly accessed at www.buoybay.org and by phone at 877-BUOY-BAY (877-286-9229).

Editor's Note: Smart Buoy deployment sequence photos available upon request (high JPEG resolution)